

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 CCO-00 RSC-01 FILE-01 SSO-00 ADP-00 /018 R

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DRAFTED BY: S/ S- O: JEALUM

APPROVED BY: S/ S- O: JEALUM

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O 221427 Z MAY 73 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 097651

TOSEC 230

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE JEC PARIS INFO RIO DE JANEIRO
FROM SAIGON MAY 22

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 8977

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR VS

SUBJECT: DRV CHARGES RE CIVILIAN PRISONERS HELD BY GVN

JEC FOR AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN

REF: STATE 097602

1. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION REPRESENTS DATA IMMEDIATELY
AVAILABLE TO THIS EMBASSY ON GVN PRISON POPULATION.

2. AS OF DEC 31 1972 THE TOTAL CAPACITY OF THE GVN CORRECTION
SYSTEM, INCLUDING NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL CORRECTION CENTERS
WAS ESTIMATED AT 36,923. THE TOTAL CAPACITY OF THE GVN DETENTION
SYSTEM WHICH COMPRISES DETENTION CENTERS, JAILS, AND LOCKUPS
DOWN TO THE LOWEST LOCAL LEVELS WAS 15,018. THIS MAKES THE
OVERALL TOTAL 51,941 AS OF THAT DATE.

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3. ALSO AS OF DEC 31 1972 THE TOTAL ESTIMATED POPULATION OF THE GVN CORRECTION SYSTEM WAS 39,657. (THE EXCESS OVER THE STATED CAPACITY WAS DUE TO THE FACT THAT EMERGENCY CAPACITY CAN EXCEED THE NORMAL FIGURE.) THE TOTAL ESTIMATED POPULATION OF THE GVN DETENTION SYSTEM WAS 4,060. THIS PUTS THE OVERALL TOTAL AT 43,717 AS OF THAT DATE.

4. THE FIGURES WE HAVE ON SPECIFIC PRISON FACILITIES AS OF DEC 31 1972 ARE AS FOLLOWS:

	CAPACITY	POPULATION
(A) CHI HOA	5,175	6,729
(B) CON SON	11,135	9,934
(C) THU DUC	1,240	1,452
(D) TAN HIEP	1,700	1,818

WE DO NOT HAVE INFORMATION ON THE OTHER PRISONS MENTIONED REFTEL. HOWEVER WE KNOW THAT THE POULATION AT PHU AUOC AS OF DEC 31 1972 WAS APPROX 31,000, ALL OF WHOM WERE POWS. THE PHU QUOC FACILITY IS NOW EMPTY AS VERIFIED BE RECENT OVER FLIGHT BY TDY FSOS.

5. SINCE THE END OF 1972 THE TOTAL GVN PRISON AND DETENTION POPULATION HAD ECLINED SIGNIFICANTLY BECAUSE OF LE RELEASE OF AT LEAST 6,000 PRISONERS ON SUCH OCCASIONS AS TET AND BUDDHA' S BIRTHDAY AND AS A GESTURE TOWARD NATIONAL RECONCILIATION FOLLOWING THE CEASEFIRE. EARLIER THIS MONTH 750 OF THE REMAINING 5,081 COMMUNIST OFFENDERS WERE RELEASED UNDER THE PARIS AGREEMENT PROVISIONS DEALING WITH CIVILIAN DETAINEES.

6. THE GVN CLASSIFIES ITS CIVILIAN PRISONERS AND DETAINEES INTO TWO MAIN CATEGORIES, COMMON CRIMINALS AND COMMUNIST OFFENDERS. THERE ARE ALSO TWO LESSER CATEGORIES ARVN MILITARY OFFENDERS WHO HAPPEN TO BE IN CIVILIAN PRISONS AND CIVILANS AWAITING TRIAL. AT THE PRESENT TIME THESE CATEGORIES ARE CONSTITUTED APPROXIMATELY AS FOLLOWS:

COMMON CRIMINALS 19,000

COMMUNIST OFFENDERS 4,300

MILITARY OFFENDERS IN CIVILIAN PRISONS 6,000

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PRISONERS AWAITING TRIAL 4,000

TOTAL 33,300

WE BELIEVE THAT THE 19,000 PRISONERS LISTED AS COMMON CRIMINALS INCLUDE AT LEAST 8,000 WHO WERE RECENTLY CLASSIFIED AS

COMMUNIST OFFENDERS BUT HAVE SINCE BEEN CONVICTED OF VIOLATIONS
OF LAW OR ACTS OF VIOLENCE PUNISHABLE UNDER ORDINARY CRIMINAL
LAWS. APART FROM THIS DIFFERENCE WE BELIEVE THE ABOVE BREAK-
DOWN IS ROUGHLY ACCURATE.

WHITEHOUSE

UNQUOTE PORTER

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NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PFOR VS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 MAY 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: willialc
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE097651
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: O: JEALUM
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730551/aaaajpgl.tel
Line Count: 123
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16-Jan-2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <16-Jan-2002 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> mcm 980226
Subject: DRV CHARGES RE CIVILIAN PRISONERS HELD BY GVN
TAGS: PFOR, n/a
To: BRASILIA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005